

### REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

By way of this Amendment, Claim 1 is amended to address the issues raised in the middle of page two of the Official Action. The language in the first several lines of original Claim 1 is amended so that Claim 1 now defines a step panel positioned at an under part of a vehicle and a wire winding pulley provided at the step panel, with the wire winding pulley being driven by a motor. As discussed on page five of the application, the step panel refers to a panel positioned at the lower side of the vehicle, near a part of a vehicle side opening.

In addition, Claims 11 and 12 are amended to address the minor issue concerning lack of antecedent basis. Finally, several other dependent claims in this application are amended to improve the form and readability of the claims, and to reflect the changes made to independent Claim 1.

In light of the foregoing, withdrawal of the claim rejection based on the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested.

As set forth in independent Claim 1, the vehicle slide door opening and closing device at issue here includes a step panel positioned at an under part of a vehicle, a wire winding pulley provided at the step panel and driven by a motor, a driven pulley and a lower roller supporting member. In addition, two wires are provided, each having one end fixed to the wire winding pulley while the other end is attached to the lower roller supporting member through a spring. In addition, Claim 1 is amended to better set forth what constitutes the lower roller supporting member by reciting that the end of each wire is engaged in a respective through hole of a

housing, with the ends of the wires extending in opposite directions and approximately horizontally.

U.S. Patent No. 5,025,591 to *DeLand et al.* discloses a power vehicle door operating system that includes a bracket and roller assembly 26. This assembly includes an arm 27 fixed to the sliding door 12 and connected to a link 29 carrying several rollers 30. The rollers 30 engage and ride in a guide rail carried on the outside of the sidewall. In addition, a cable spool 238 (238A, 238B, 238C) is drivably operated by a motor 202M. A lower cable member 41 extends from the cable spool 238 to a lower front portion of the sliding door, with one end of the lower cable member 41 anchored on the cable spool 238 and the opposite end fixed to a lower bracket 22 as illustrated in Fig. 6. An upper cable member 42 has one end anchored to the cable spool 238 and an opposite end fixed to the link 29 of the bracket and roller assembly 26.

The Official Action observes that the cable spool 238B corresponds to the claimed wire winding pulley, while the bracket and roller assembly 26 corresponds to the claimed lower roller supporting member. However, as recited in independent Claim 1, the wire winding pulley is provided at a step panel which is positioned at an under part of a vehicle. As clearly illustrated in, for example, Fig. 6 of *DeLand et al.*, the cable pulley 238 (238A, 238B, 238C) is not located at a step panel positioned at an under part of a vehicle.

In addition, Claim 1 recites that one end of each of the two wires is fixed to the wire winding pulley while the other end of each wire is attached to the lower roller supporting member. This is not the case with the cable members 41, 42 disclosed in *DeLand et al.* Rather, as noted above, the one end of the lower cable member 41 is

anchored to the cable spool 238 while the other end is fixed to a lower bracket 22, and one end of the upper cable member 42 is anchored to the cable spool 238 while the other end is fixed to the bracket and roller assembly 26.

The disclosure in U.S. Patent No. 5,505,022 to *Shibata et al.* does not make up for the foregoing deficiencies as the disclosure in this reference pertains to a window regulator. Thus, this reference does not teach that a vehicle slide door opening and closing device should be configured so that a wire winding pulley (to which is fixed the ends of two wires) should be provided at a step panel positioned at an under part of a vehicle, and does not teach that one end of each of two wires should be fixed to a wire winding pulley while the other end of each wire is attached to a lower roller supporting member as claimed. Further, *Shibata et al.* does not disclose an arrangement in which ends of two wires are engaged in respective through holes in a housing as set forth in Claim 1.

It is thus respectfully submitted that a combination of the disclosures in *DeLand et al.* and *Shibata et al.* would not have motivated one to construct a vehicle slide door opening and closing device having the features recited in independent Claim 1. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection or the rejection of record and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited.

New independent Claim 13 defines the vehicle slide door opening and closing device in terms similar to original Claim 1, although the wording has been changed slightly. As recited in Claim 13, the vehicle slide door opening and closing device comprises a step panel positioned under a part of a side opening of a vehicle, a wire winding pulley provided at the step panel, a motor operatively connected to the wire winding pulley to drive the wire winding pulley, a driven pulley, a lower roller

supporting member, a first wire wound on the driven pulley and having one end fixed to the wire winding pulley and an opposite end fixed to the lower roller supporting member through a first spring, and a second wire wound on the driven pulley and comprising one end fixed to the wire winding pulley and an opposite end fixed to the lower roller supporting member through a second spring.

Claim 13 is allowable over the cited references at least because the references lack disclosure of a wire winding pulley provided at a step panel as claimed, and first and second wires whose opposite ends are connected to the wire winding pulley and a lower roller supporting member as claimed.

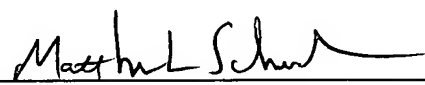
Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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